

***Fort Buchanan Fire Department***  
***Holiday Fire Safety Tips***

Fire & Emergency Reporting Phone: **(787) 707-5911 / DSN 740-5911**

**Holiday Safety:**

In the United States, there are at least 10,000 candle-related fires that occur every year.

Each year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 8,700 people for injuries, such as falls, cuts and shocks, related to holiday lights, decorations, etc.

In addition, Christmas trees are involved in about 400 fires annually, resulting in 20 deaths, 70 injuries, and an average of more than \$15 million in property loss and damage.

Please consider the following during holiday season to maintain a safety environment.

**Candles:**

Keep matches, lighters, and candles away from children and never leave burning candles unattended.

Always use nonflammable holders. Place candles where they won't be knocked over.

Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.

Never use candles near evergreen trees, or any combustibles (i.e., curtains, wrapping paper, etc.).

[More information about candles](#)

**Lights:**

Use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory – UL ® (Underwriter's Laboratories approval), which indicates conformance with safety standards.

Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken/cracked sockets, frayed wires, bare spots, loose connections, and discard damaged sets.

Use only outdoor-approved lights for

**Decorations:**

In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.

Avoid using trimmings that contain small removable parts, and resemble candy or food in order to prevent small children from eating, swallowing or inhaling items.

Use only noncombustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree.

Place all metal ornaments safely away from electrical sources.

**Evergreen Tree:**

Choose one that's fresh by pulling along a small branch. (Needles and branches shouldn't be brittle).

Re-cut the bottom of the trunk (about 2-3 inches of the base) of a pre-cut tree. Trees become more and more hazardous as they dry out - keep them away from sunlight.

Use a sturdy stand that can be filled with

outdoor decorating.

Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord (GFCI). Unplug all lights when you leave/go to bed.

### **Artificial Tree:**

Never put lights on a metallic tree – use a spotlight instead.

Artificial trees should bear a UL ® label of approval. Be absolutely certain the tree is made of fire retardant materials.

For both trees: Place the trees away from sources of heat.

The placement of a tree (real or artificial) inside the room is very important. DON'T BLOCK EXITS.

### **Coping with Stress:**

The holiday season is one of the most stressful times of the year. Allow enough time to shop rather than hurrying through stores and parking lots.

When shopping, make several trips out to the car to drop off packages rather than trying to carry too many items.

Take time out for yourself. Relax, read, or enjoy your favorite hobby at your own pace.

### **Toys:**

Choose toys with care. Keep in mind the child's age, interests, and skill level.

Toys with long strings or cords may be

water. Evergreen trees should be watered daily. Tree should be displayed no longer than 2 weeks. **Discard accordingly by using “tree bag” – hardware store.**

### **House:**

Beware of toxic decorations. Poinsettias, Mistletoe and Holly Berries may be poisonous if more than a few are swallowed.

Holiday wrappings should be removed from the immediate area and discarded in a safe manner.

Use care when disposing of smoking materials. Cigarette butts can smolder if not completely doused in water before disposal.

Ensure oven/stove tops are clean, free from grease and are in good working order.

Do not leave out foods that are potential choking hazards, such as nuts, hard candies, popcorn, or candy canes.

Never leave alcoholic drinks within reach of children.

Make sure your family has an escape plan in case of fire -- practice it! Always have an operable fire extinguisher ready and available.

The law bans small parts in new toys intended for children under three - includes removable eyes & noses on stuffed toys, dolls, and removable squeaks on squeeze toys.

New toys intended for children less than 8

dangerous for infants and very young children. The cords may become wrapped around an infant's neck, causing strangulation.

years of age should, by regulation, be free of sharp glass, points, and metal edges.

Be a label reader. Look for and heed age recommendations, such as "Not recommended for children under three. "

Toy caps and some noise making guns and other toys can produce sounds at noise levels that can damage hearing.

Projectiles - guided missiles and similar flying toys -- can be turned into weapons and can injure the eyes in particular. Ensure the tips are secured.

### **Traveling:**

#### **DON'T DRINK & DRIVE!!!**

If you intend to drink, always designate a non-drinking driver. If you are the host of a holiday gathering, be sure there are non-alcoholic beverages available for guests who are driving.

Be sure your car is safe: check tires, battery, lights, fluid levels, brakes, etc.

During the holiday months, people travel more than ever. Wearing a seat belt may prevent injury in a motor vehicle collision. **ALWAYS BUCKLE UP !!!**

Carry emergency supplies: booster cables, flashlight and first-aid kit.

Allow extra time to travel: plan for changing weather conditions - poorer visibility or heavy traffic.

Ensure all passengers are wearing seat belts.

Be alert for erratic driving – weaving, driving too fast or too slow.

Please remember children (younger than 6 years old) should be seated in an approved safety seat according to local law.

### **Last but not least:**

Be careful of placement of wires, especially around doors, walkways, and driveways.

Watch for animals, children, and the mailman.

**Make a special effort to protect yourself and the people you care about. It's one of the best gifts anyone can give.**